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# **BEST Fleets**®

## **TO DRIVE FOR**

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Compensation Work/Life

**Now Appearing**  
dates through 2022

**HALL OF FAME**

Human Resources  
Operations Performance  
Career Development **Benefits**

**2022 Results Book**

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# 2022 **BEST Fleets**® TO DRIVE FOR

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## Unprecedented challenges, continued evolution

Welcome to the 2022 edition of Best Fleets to Drive For®! The fourteenth iteration of this program saw data collected through the fall of 2021. The program set new records once again, only four months after winners from the 2021 edition took to the stage in Las Vegas, showing an industry thriving despite continued pandemic-induced challenges.

“ Year after year, the overall winners are truly changing the game. It’s imperative that fleets establish driver-centric offerings which attract and retain a skilled workforce, while establishing programs that improve the work-life balance for their employees. Congratulations to these fleets on this well-deserved honor. ”

**John Lyboldt**  
PRESIDENT

Truckload Carriers Association





## Statistics

Drivers nominated 207 companies this year, more than a third higher than last year's record of 150.

The participation rate matched that nomination spike as well, with **110** fleets completing the evaluation process, breaking the previous record of 102. The bar was raised going into the final scoring round as **93** finalists made it all the way through, up by 24% from 2021, and a record total of **8,502** driver surveys were collected.

## The Evaluation

Best Fleets to Drive For is open to all for-hire fleets operating 10 tractor-trailers in the United States or Canada. For this program, a for-hire company must be purely for-hire. If a fleet hauls any of its own products, it's considered a private fleet. However, for-hire carriers wholly owned by other companies (e.g., manufacturers) are currently eligible.

Each participating company must complete four steps:

**1 Nomination** The process starts when a driver or contractor currently working with the company nominates them as a Best

Fleet. Only one nomination is required, but somebody driving a truck on behalf of the company has to speak up.

**2 Questionnaire** Nominated fleets complete an online questionnaire that collects information about company programs and policies across a variety of different categories. For the 2021 edition of the program, there were 110 questions in the default corporate questionnaire and 97 in the variation for contractor fleets.

**3 Interview** After the questionnaire is complete, CarriersEdge representatives conduct a follow-up interview to verify and discuss the information provided in the questionnaire.

**4 Survey** The final segment requires a target percentage of drivers/contractors to complete a survey about their experience with the company.

## Scoring

The scoring period starts as surveys close, analyzing answers of finalists who have completed all evaluation stages. Fleets are scored across 3 categories – the programs they offer their drivers, the satisfaction level of those drivers, and the results the company is seeing

in terms safety and retention. The scoring process is detailed, slow, and time-consuming. For the 2022 edition there were over 5,000 distinct answers that needed to be scored in the programs section alone – a team of six worked full-time for a full week to complete it all.

### Scoring the programs

The scoring team starts by reviewing the data collected and determining which questions can be scored. (Some questions are purely for segmentation purposes or trend analysis, while others may not have enough meaningful data to be scored.) Contractor-only fleets have a separate questionnaire focused more on how they help their contractors build successful businesses, so their scorable question list looks different.

Once the set of scorable questions is determined, scorers go through and score each question individually. All responses to that one question are reviewed to define the matrix of points and criteria, then all responses

are scored against that matrix. The process continues for each scorable question.

Once all questions are scored, a program score for the carrier is calculated.

### Measuring driver satisfaction

The driver survey has 54 questions that track trends and sentiment, with responses fed into a formula that measures satisfaction at the company across various parameters and segments.

### Calculating the results

The safety performance of each finalist is determined by tracking preventable and non-preventable DOT-reportable accidents per million miles. The retention score of each company is calculated with a custom formula that includes several data point inputs and controls for various factors that can skew results - for instance, whether a fleet operates in Canada or the US, or whether they have a new entrant program.

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Both safety performance and retention score are combined to generate the final results score.

### **The Schedule**

The 2022 edition returned to its traditional schedule with nominations opening after Labor Day and closing on Halloween, followed by ninety-minute online interviews with one or multiple executives at each participating carrier throughout November and into December. The driver surveys were collected from mid-November until New Year's Eve to complete the final stage of evaluations.

Fleets had a short window to complete these extensive steps during the busiest time of the year, so making it to the scoring stage was an accomplishment of its own for finalists.

The dramatic alterations to the schedule for the 2021 edition resulted in the award presentation and unveiling of overall winners for the thirteenth iteration occurring in late September during the nomination period for the 2022 edition. This meant that final fleet reports and consultations happened in October instead of the usual schedule of April and May. The overlapping programs complicated an already busy schedule for participating fleets, so it's even more of a testament to these companies that they managed to stay on top of everything throughout.

### **Hall of Fame**

Studying Best Fleets participants for 14 years, there are definite behavioral patterns evident every year. One of those behavioral traits is that fleets who repeatedly make the Top 20 tend to continue performing at that level – they have an operating model that enables them to stay there. These fleets continue to push forward, meeting the ever-increasing requirements to make the Top 20.

At the same time, with increasing participation in the program, there are more than 20 fleets who demonstrate stellar performance year after year. In many cases, the difference between the fleet at #20 and the fleet at #21 may be 1% or less in final scoring.

The Hall of Fame was created to recognize those consistently high performing fleets who

have made it into the Top 20 for 10 consecutive years, or 7 consecutive years plus an overall award. However, to ensure the industry keeps moving forward, and the best fleets don't rest on their laurels, the existing Hall of Fame inductees will have to requalify every year to maintain their place.

There are 8 fleets taking to the stage this year with the distinction of entering the inaugural Hall of Fame. Here are some of the reasons why they stand out year after year:

#### **Bison Transport**

*We make our programs personal – you're safe with me.*

Bison is a regular winner of safety awards, but those programs aren't just coming from corporate - drivers reflect those values in their surveys as well. Bison also looks beyond the truck to focus on the driver, with branding and program design that make drivers feel part of the solution.

#### **Boyle Transportation**

*Taking a load off the driver.*

Drivers often bear the brunt of operational and maintenance problems, while waiting for shipments or on the road dealing with equipment issues. Boyle's generous pay guarantee motivates operations and maintenance to keep drivers moving and productive, ensuring greater efficiency across the company and taking the burden off drivers wherever possible.

#### **Central Oregon Truck Company**

*Rolling out the red carpet – literally.*

COTC's concierge program is now well known, but it's just one example of how the company keeps finding new ways to make the total experience safer and more enjoyable for drivers.

#### **FTC Transportation**

*We might be small, but we are mighty.*

Even with a small staff in the office, FTC manages to have fully realized recognition programs, a detailed scorecard, and strong professional development – often besting companies many times their size.

## **Grand Island Express**

*Always more to learn - just keep swimming.*

With 11 consecutive years on the list, Grand Island Express has clearly figured out the formula for success. However, it doesn't stop them from continuing to add new things every year. Always the first to pick a Best Fleets results book and first in the room for an education session, GIX continues to find new ways to improve.

## **Halvor Lines**

*The original health and wellness fleet.*

Halvor stood out early for their communal approach to driver wellness that includes both physical and mental health. That concern is evident throughout the driver's career – from the gift bags they receive when arriving for orientation to ensuring nothing falls through the cracks by implementing a CRM to track conversations with drivers.

## **Nussbaum Transportation Service**

*There's a process for that.*

Nussbaum does a lot of things that other companies do, but they take a different approach, creating well-defined processes and ensuring they drill down to focus on the causes of an issue rather than the symptoms. With industry leading performance management and professional development programs, every element of a driver's career gets attention.

## **Prime Inc.**

*Size has benefits.*

While many large fleets have a reputation for being impersonal, Prime has redefined the concept of "communal workplace". Its head office facilities are well known for their resort-like qualities, but the sense of community extends well beyond that to its various driver committees, social efforts, and even programs to help drivers manage their personal relationships.

## **Milestones**

American Central Transport and Thomas E. Keller made it to the Top 20 for the 5th consecutive year.

With the Hall of Fame taking several repeat winners out of the Top 20, space opened for

several new names to be added. Some were returnees, having made the list in past years, and some had been Fleets to Watch previously. However, 3 are completely new to the list – K&J Trucking, Continental Express, and Decker Truck Line. Congrats to those companies for leaping into the Top 20!

## **Observations – A Perfect Storm of a Year**

As COVID shutdowns subsided, the industry emerged from pandemic disruption of the previous year and swung hard into a massive driver shortage. COVID-caused supply chain disruptions, mixed with reductions to the labor force and increased requirements in various places, put extreme pressure on the entire industry. As a result, fleets stepped up efforts across all areas to improve what they can for drivers, minimize the impact of things they can't control or improve, and generally try to find a path out of the pressure cooker.

In the following pages, we detail some observations from specific categories evaluated by the Best Fleets program.

# THE BEST FLEETS PODCAST

The culture is changing, and carriers are improving the quality of workplaces for drivers. With a mountain of data and advice in hand, tune in to hear first-hand what fleets are doing to be considered best-of-the-best.



YouTube



SOUNDCLOUD

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# BEST Fleets<sup>®</sup> TO DRIVE FOR

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A monthly round-up of everything Best Fleets! With stories that dive deep into culture changing practices, to behind the scenes of the program details and Best Fleet spotlights, each issue is packed with information you won't want to miss. Watch for it the last week of each month!

Newsletter

# THE BEST FLEETS NEWSLETTER

[www.BF2DF.com](http://www.BF2DF.com)

# 2022 BEST Fleets TO DRIVE FOR<sup>®</sup>

For the first time in over a decade, this year's Top 20 includes 10 fleets who weren't on last year's list.

SMALL CARRIER CATEGORY	LOCATION	DRIVERS / OWNER-OPS	YEARS IN TOP 20
Brenny Specialized, Inc.	St. Joseph, MN	72	1
Chief Carriers, Inc.	Grand Island, NE	60	2 Consecutive
Garner Trucking, Inc.	Findlay, OH	83	6 Consecutive
K & J Trucking, Inc.	Sioux Falls, SD	100	1
Liberty Linehaul, Inc.	Ayr, ON	80	2
Thomas E. Keller Trucking	Defiance, OH	233	5 Consecutive
TransLand	Strafford, MO	200	1
TransPro Freight Systems Limited	Milton, ON	56	9 Consecutive
Veriha Trucking, Inc.	Marinette, WI	203	2
Wellington Group of Companies	Cambridge, ON	59	3 Consecutive

LARGE CARRIER CATEGORY	LOCATION	DRIVERS / OWNER-OPS	YEARS IN TOP 20
American Central Transport	Kansas City, MO	265	5 Consecutive
Challenger Motor Freight Inc.	Cambridge, ON	1052	6 (3 Consecutive)
Continental Express, Inc.	Sidney, OH	466	1
Decker Truck Line, Inc.	Fort Dodge, IA	683	1
Erb Transport	New Hamburg, ON	972	10 (2 Consecutive)
Fortigo Freight Services Inc.	Etobicoke, ON	365	3 Consecutive
Fremont Contract Carriers, Inc.	Fremont, NE	431	12 (3 Consecutive)
Landstar Transportation Logistics, Inc.	Jacksonville, FL	11199	7
Leonard's Express	Farmington, NY	620	1
TLD Logistics Services, Inc.	Knoxville, TN	402	6

## 2022 Fleets to Watch<sup>™</sup>

In addition to the Top 20, every year we identify five fleets who caught our eye.

**Epes Transport System, LLC**  
Greensboro, NC

**Stokes Trucking, LLC**  
Tremonton, UT

**GP Transco**  
Joliet, IL

**TP Trucking**  
Central Point, OR

**Magnum LTD**  
Fargo, ND

### Why are we watching them?

The Fleets to Watch are companies that stood out during the evaluation program for one reason or another. It may be particularly creative ideas, because they surprised us with something noteworthy that we hadn't seen before, or because we've seen the progress they're making and know they're on their way to the Top 20.

Each year, there are companies previously named as Fleets to Watch who make it onto the Top 20, so it's definitely worth paying attention to these fleets: there's greatness in their future!



# 2022 BEST Fleets TO DRIVE FOR HALL OF FAME

The inaugural Hall of Fame includes 8 companies who have been named Best Fleets for 10 consecutive years, or 7 years plus an overall award.

HALL OF FAME	LOCATION	DRIVERS / OWNER-OPS
Bison Transport Inc	Winnipeg, MB	2063
Boyle Transportation	Billerica, MA	138
Central Oregon Truck Company, Inc.	Redmond, OR	285
FTC Transportation, Inc.	Oklahoma City, OK	22
Grand Island Express	Grand Island, NE	142
Halvor Lines, Inc.	Superior, WI	610
Nussbaum Transportation Services, Inc.	Hudson, IL	432
Prime Inc.	Springfield, MO	8149

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# SCORING RESULTS



Development & Career

Work/Life

Performance & Recognition

Human Resource Strategy

Operations Strategy

Career Development Training



# COMPENSATION

## What it tells us

What efforts the company is making to provide a stable, predictable income for drivers (and owner-operators).

## Notable developments

Guaranteed pay has dropped in significance because of the abundance in available freight. Most fleets have programs in that area, but it's rarer for drivers to be paid just the minimum.

Orientation pay has seen a big increase, with one fleet paying close to \$500 while several others paid the equivalent of over \$200 per day (compared to \$150-200 at the top end last year). There has even been an increase in fleets paying contractors for attendance, and more options included in the package.

With enough fleets this year offering some form of profit sharing and its equivalent, the question has similarly expanded to include a small range of options beyond a simple "yes/no".

## Scoring

### 1. What programs do you offer to provide drivers consistency in pay? (e.g., guaranteed pay, weekly minimum, split loads, salary)

- 0: None, or layover pay
- 1: Split loads, hourly
- 2: New entrant, certain routes
- 3: Full guarantee

### 2. Is there a range in the starting pay for drivers and/or owner-ops? (i.e., Does everyone doing the same work start at the same base rate, or are there ranges based on experience and/or skill level?)

- 0: No range
- 1: Raise within 6 months
- 2: Range from day one
- 3: Range + raise or extras

### 3. Do you pay drivers/owner-operators for attending orientation? If so, how much and for how long?

- 0: Hotel/meals/expenses only
- 1: Less than \$150/day
- 2: \$150-199/day
- 3: \$200-\$499/day
- 4: \$500/day or greater

#### Owner-Operator fleets

- 1: None
- 2: Travel/Accommodations
- 3: Accommodations + swag
- 4: Pay/signing bonus

### 4. Do you offer ESOP, profit sharing, stock options, or any other kind of program that rewards drivers/contractors for company prosperity? If so, how does it work?

- 0: No
- 1: Ad hoc
- 2: Profit Sharing, ESOP, or other formal plan

### 5. (Owner-Op only) Do you offer financial incentives in addition to base rates? (Examples include

### performance or longevity bonuses, recruiting or sign-on bonuses, or purchase/leasing plans for equipment.)

- 1: Minimal (e.g., clean inspection or safety)
- 2: Some (e.g., clean inspection + safety)
- 3: Clean inspection, safety, discounts, reward programs
- 4: Additional bonuses

TOP 20	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
ACT	2	2	3	1	-
Brenny	1	3	1	2	-
Challenger	3	2	3	0	-
Chief	3	2	3	0	-
Continental	3	3	3	0	-
Decker	3	2	3	0	-
Erb	3	2	3	2	-
Fortigo	-	-	4	-	2
FCC	2	2	4	2	-
Garner	3	2	1	0	-
K&J	-	-	3	-	4
Landstar	-	-	4	-	2
Leonard's Express	1	3	1	2	-
Liberty	3	0	2	0	-
TKeller	3	2	2	0	-
TLD	3	2	1	0	-
Transland	3	2	4	2	-
TransPro	-	-	4	-	4
Veriha	3	2	1	1	-
WMF	3	2	3	2	-
HALL OF FAME	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Bison	2	2	1	0	-
Boyle	3	0	4	0	-
COTC	3	2	3	0	-
FTCT	2	2	2	0	-
GIX	3	2	3	0	-
Halvor	2	2	4	0	-
Nussbaum	3	2	2	2	-
Prime	-	-	4	-	3



# BENEFITS / NON-FINANCIAL COMPENSATION

## What it tells us

How well the company takes care of its drivers/contractors, outside of the workplace.

## Notable developments

While the majority of participating fleets offer benefits, the difference this year was in how long it takes until drivers qualify to receive them. More fleets shortened the qualification period this edition, continuing the trend from previous years.

Retirement programs with a company match are nearly standard fare now. Like benefits, the major change this year is shortening the qualification period, with several fleets offering the match in the first 90 days.

## Scoring

**1. (Owner-Op only) Are non company-sponsored health insurance programs available for independent contractors to participate in? (e.g. life insurance, medical/dental, downtime, tractor)**

- 0: No
- 2: Yes

**2. How long does it take to qualify for benefits? (e.g., 90 days, 1st of the month following 60 days)**

- 1: After 90 days
- 2: After 60 days
- 3: After 30 days
- 4: Immediately

**3. Does the company offer a pension or retirement savings plan? If so, please indicate how long before employees can participate.**

- 0: Nothing offered
- 1: Program offered, >90 day wait period
- 2: Program offered after 90 days
- 3: Program offered before 90 days

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 0: No
- 2: Yes

**4. If the company matches any portion of employee contribution to the retirement plan, what is the total contribution in the past year, as a percent of the total payroll?**

- 0: No match
- 1: Up to 1%
- 2: Up to 2%
- 3: Over 2%

**5. What is the company's policy regarding vacation and other time off requests?**

- 0: No paid time off
- 1: Basic (e.g., 1 week after 1 year), lower top end or longer ramp up
- 2: Basic with higher top end or other extras
- 3: Substantial 1st year; higher top end or other extras

TOP 20	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
ACT	-	2	2	2	2
Brenny	-	2	1	2	2
Challenger	-	3	1	2	3
Chief	-	1	3	2	3
Continental	-	1	2	3	3
Decker	-	2	3	2	3
Erb	-	2	3	2	3
Fortigo	2	-	2	-	-
FCC	-	3	3	2	2
Garner	-	4	1	0	3
K&J	2	-	2	-	-
Landstar	0	-	2	-	-
Leonard's Express	-	2	2	3	2
Liberty	-	2	2	2	2
TKeller	-	3	2	2	3
TLD	-	2	3	2	2
Transland	-	2	2	2	2
TransPro	2	-	2	-	-
Veriha	-	2	3	1	2
WMF	-	4	2	1	1
HALL OF FAME	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Bison	-	1	1	1	3
Boyle	-	2	2	2	3
COTC	-	2	2	2	2
FTCT	-	3	3	3	3
GIX	-	3	2	1	2
Halvor	-	2	2	1	2
Nussbaum	-	2	3	1	2
Prime	2	-	2	-	-



# PERFORMANCE & RECOGNITION

## What it tells us

How effectively the company measures, recognizes, and manages individual performance.

## Notable developments

With so many fleets relying on technology to provide driver performance metrics and benchmarking, the focus this year shifted to how much those fleets actually discuss those metrics with their drivers – how are they balancing that technology with the need for human interaction?

Recognition programs are evolving to include drivers in the process now as well. Fleets are more commonly rewarding drivers through peer recognition awards and career opportunities such as a seat on the advisory board or representing the company as an ambassador.

## Scoring

### 1. Is driver performance evaluated? How is it done, and how often?

- 1: Mgmt tracking or annual review only
- 2: Scorecard only + coaching
- 3: Scorecard plus annual review
- 4: Scorecard, multiple reviews OR objectives

### 2. Beyond bonus programs, is there recognition for top performers?

- 1: Minimal, social media only
- 2: DOM/DOY programs only
- 3: DOM/DOY + some extras
- 4: Multiple reward types, association nominations, OR driver involvement
- 5: Wide range of programs + news/video/podcast and driver involvement

### 3. Is there a benchmarking system in place for top performers? If so, is this information available to drivers?

- 1: Nothing formal, not visible to driver
- 2: Few metrics or infrequent, upon request, scorecard, or tech only
- 3: Multiple metrics for individuals + review/coaching, app

### 4. Does the company include any driver-related metrics when evaluating dispatcher (or fleet manager) performance?

- 0: None
- 1: Performance only
- 2: Performance + turnover, few metrics
- 3: Driver home time or satisfaction, scorecard
- 4: Variety, regular review, satisfaction, or home time
- 5: Substantial variety, satisfaction, AND home time

### Owner-Operator fleets

- 1: Set goals with dispatchers, no metrics
- 3: Feedback from contractors OR metrics only
- 5: Feedback + metrics

### 5. What happens once a driver has had a collision or infraction?

- 1: Training/discipline focused
- 2: Investigative focus, coaching/training, driver(s) involved
- 3: Coaching/training + development plan, empathy/more behaviour focused (done "with" the driver) OR peer involvement/appeals
- 4: Coaching, empathy, development plan + peer involvement/appeals process

TOP 20	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
ACT	4	5	3	4	2
Brenny	4	4	2	4	3
Challenger	2	4	2	3	2
Chief	4	4	3	5	2
Continental	2	4	2	4	3
Decker	2	5	2	2	3
Erb	2	5	3	1	2
Fortigo	4	5	3	3	4
FCC	2	3	3	4	3
Garner	2	5	3	5	3
K&J	3	4	3	5	3
Landstar	3	4	2	1	2
Leonard's Express	2	4	2	4	2
Liberty	2	2	2	4	3
TKeller	2	4	3	5	2
TLD	3	4	3	4	3
Transland	3	4	2	4	3
TransPro	4	4	3	3	4
Veriha	3	4	2	5	2
WMF	4	4	2	4	2
HALL OF FAME	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Bison	3	4	3	5	3
Boyle	3	4	3	3	4
COTC	3	5	3	4	2
FTCT	2	5	3	4	3
GIX	3	5	2	2	3
Halvor	3	4	2	5	3
Nussbaum	4	5	3	4	3
Prime	3	4	2	3	3



# HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

## What it tells us

How well the company builds, maintains, and brings new people into its culture.

## Notable developments

Driver surveys have become an industry norm, with at 70% of finalists conducting them annually.

Onboarding continues to move beyond the traditional classroom, with more online pre-work offered to drivers before they attend orientation and increasing post-orientation coaching and mentoring efforts.

## Scoring

### 1. Do you have a program to assist new entrants to the industry? If so, describe your new entrant program and how many new entrants come through in a typical year.

- 0: No program
- 1: Small program, partnership with driving school/ ad hoc/LP coaching
- 2: Moderate program, cover % of tuition/some results (~10% of total drivers)
- 3: Substantial investment/cover tuition, finishing program only, results (~20%+)
- 4: Substantial investment; CDL training, certified or multiple programs, results (~40%+, small co ~20%+)

### 2. How many of those exits returned during the past year? If you take specific actions or have a program to encourage those returns, please include those details as well.

- 1: No program
- 2: Formal program
- 3: Formal program, significant results (>20% returns)

### 3. How does the company ensure its total work environment (i.e., compensation, benefits, professional development programs, policies, etc.) meets the needs of drivers?

- 1: Open door policy/industry reports/outside comparisons
- 2: Light effort to solicit feedback
- 3: Annual survey, some other initiatives
- 4: Multiple surveys + some other initiatives
- 5: Intensive effort (multiple methods and channels)

#### Owner-Operator fleets

- 1: Open door policy, occasional survey
- 3: Multiple surveys plus some outreach
- 5: Intensive effort (multiple surveys and outreach efforts)

### 4. Beyond the legal requirements (such as Equal Employment), how does the company encourage workforce diversity?

- 0: Equal opportunity, no effort
- 1: Association membership, bilingual staff, minimal effort
- 2: Targeted recruiting efforts OR management

representation (no results)

- 3: Bilingual support staff and some representation management/DABs/training, results
- 4: Strong documented inclusion programs, investment + results
- 5: Ethnic/disability/gender inclusion + results (2 out of 3)

### 5. How do you ensure that your drivers are not subjected to, or contributors to, inappropriate, hostile, or toxic work environments?

- 0: Policy or response process
- 1: Basic, training only at orientation
- 2: Recurring training or other
- 3: Orientation training + recurring training
- 4: Regular training + app/phone/macro or TAT
- 5: Regular training + app/phone/macro + TAT or other

#### Owner-Operator fleets

- 1: Basic, policy and response process, focused on shippers
- 3: TAT, terminal-based programs, only at orientation OR customer score card
- 5: Proactive reporting (app, macro, or phone number) and recurring harassment training

### 6. Do you have a pet policy? If so, what is it?

- 0: No
- 1: Large fee, or deposit with size/breed restrictions
- 2: Few size/breed restrictions, little or no deposit
- 3: Pet-specific investments and/or facilities

### 7. Do you have a military recruitment program? If so, please describe how it works and how many vets you have hired as a result of the program.

- 1: None/limited
- 2: Informal or recognition/support (wraps, decals)
- 3: Formal or recognition/support
- 4: Formal + multiple methods of recognition/ support

### 8. Describe the company's onboarding program after hire.

- 1: Post-orientation check-ins/review only
- 2: Check-ins/surveys, ad hoc mentoring
- 3: Check-ins/surveys AND expectations exchange/driver mentors/special dispatch/

- follow up orientation or pre-orientation comms
- 4: Check-ins/surveys AND expectations exchange AND mentorship AND personal touch/welcome, post orientation comms
- 5: Exec involvement/pre-orientation comms AND expectations exchange/mentor program AND practical training AND lengthy post orientation process.

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 1: Pre-orientation & orientation exchange only
- 2: Formal check-ins/surveys, two-way feedback
- 3: Check-ins/surveys AND mentor program OR practical training
- 4: Formal check-ins/surveys AND mentoring AND practical training/ongoing or pre-orientation training
- 5: Formal check-ins/surveys AND mentoring AND practical training/ongoing business development AND special dispatch or pre-orientation training

**9. How do you ensure consistency in the messages from recruiting, safety, and operations?**

- 1. Reliant on one person
- 2. Hand in hand/regular meetings/job outlines/post-orientation surveys
- 3. F2F Expectations Exchange OR cross-training
- 4. Signed EE AND staff training/DAB input/extra follow-up

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 1. Reliant on one person
- 2. Hand in hand/regular meetings/job outlines/post-orientation surveys
- 3. Systems support/extra training
- 4. SOPs/KPIs, system support and extra follow-up

**10. Is there a driver committee or advisory board at your company?**

- 0: Nothing
- 1: Informal, occasional
- 2: Formal, safety-focused or company committee participation
- 3: Formal driver/contractor-led
- 4: Multiple committees or substantial process
- 5: Multiple committees and substantial process

TOP 20	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
ACT	4	2	4	3	4	1	4	2	4	3
Brenny	1	1	4	2	1	1	2	3	2	4
Challenger	4	2	4	5	3	1	4	4	4	4
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FCC	1	1	4	4	2	0	2	5	4	5
Garner	4	2	5	5	2	0	3	5	3	4
K&J	-	2	3	2	1	-	1	5	3	2
Landstar	-	1	3	2	0	-	1	4	3	3
Leonard's Express	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	4	2	3
Liberty	2	2	5	3	4	0	3	3	2	2
TKeller	3	2	5	3	5	1	3	4	4	4
TLD	4	2	5	3	4	2	3	2	4	4
Transland	2	2	5	4	5	1	2	4	3	4
TransPro	-	2	3	3	0	-	1	4	3	1
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FTCT	0	2	5	4	3	1	2	4	3	5
GIX	3	2	4	5	3	3	2	4	4	4
Halvor	4	3	5	5	2	3	3	5	4	4
Nussbaum	4	2	5	4	3	1	4	5	4	3
Prime	-	3	5	3	1	-	4	4	2	4



# OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

## What it tells us

What the day-to-day working experience is like in the company; what efforts the company is making to continuously improve efficiency.

## Notable developments

The average age of fleets has notably increased as equipment shortages persist.

COVID support continues to evolve. Top performing fleets are regularly supplementing the now-common PPE with education efforts and townhalls for drivers to discuss concerns.

New this year was a question that looked at how fleets pair drivers with dispatchers or fleet managers. Initial findings show that while many have formal programs in place to improve driver success rates, only a few follow-up afterwards to ensure successful outcomes.

For driver efficiency, dedicated, fleet-specific mobile apps are becoming common among finalists. Top performers are now supplementing those apps with multiple other efforts to improve efficiency.

## Scoring

### 1. Do drivers have input into vehicle specs or selection?

- 0: No input
- 1: Light/mgmt focused/orientation
- 2: Track preferences/ad hoc input
- 3: DAB, meetings, formal input, upgrades
- 4: Pilot/focus groups, OEM visits, rewards

### 2. (Owner-Op only) What programs does the company provide to assist independent contractors in maintaining their equipment?

- 1: Basic maintenance/parts discounts
- 3: Discount/inspections plus additional programs
- 5: Extensive programs, options

### 3. How do you minimize equipment-related downtime?

- 1: Basic/light, a few hours down
- 2: Moderate effort, most PM done during downtime, some breakdown support
- 3: Significant effort - most/all PM done during downtime, active monitoring

### 4. Do you have annual targets for safety record improvement? If so, what are the targets for the current year?

- 0: No targets
- 1: General/non-specific target
- 2: Some specific targets
- 3: Multiple specific targets, action plan

### 5. What mechanisms are in place to avoid or resolve problems with shippers (such as excess waiting time, unsafe yards, or poor treatment)?

- 1: Informal process, occasional pay, longer wait
- 2: Formal process, pay @ 2 hours
- 3: Pay @ 90 minutes; proactive program, driver feedback process/app
- 4: Pay @ 1 hr; drop/hook, proactive program(s), driver feedback process/app
- 5: Pay for all, special structures

### Owner-Operator fleets

- 1: Handle case by case, drivers paid after company recoups
- 3: Formal process, drivers paid after 2 hrs
- 5: Proactive ongoing work with shippers, drivers paid after 1 hr or less

### 6. Does the company have a policy for handling operations during natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes, floods, forest fires)?

- 1: None/office remote work only
- 2: Reactive, driver rerouting
- 3: Proactive office policy or driver assistance (e.g., hotel or funds), driver rerouting
- 4: Geofencing/driver communication plans and assistance

### 7. How are you currently supporting drivers through the COVID-19 pandemic?

- 1: Basic (PPE, increased cleaning, updates)
- 2: Several supports in place (basic + 1 significant additional)
- 3: Significant effort made and multiple supports in place (basic + 2/3 significant supports)
- 4: Significant efforts + education/clinics/bonuses (hero/vaccine)

### 8. Does the company have a policy for protecting against cyber attacks?

- 0: No policy or protection
- 1: 3rd party/basic protection/IT only
- 2: Some systems, policies, or ad hoc training
- 3: Systems, policies, training for staff
- 4: Extensive protection, insurance, or regular office training
- 5: Extensive protection, robust systems, significant processes, multi-layered, driver training

### Owner-Operator fleets

- 0: No policy or protection
- 1: 3rd party/basic protection/IT only
- 2: Some systems, policies, or ad hoc training



- 3: Systems, policies, training for staff
- 4: Extensive protection, insurance, or regular office training
- 5: Extensive protection, robust systems, significant processes, multi-layered, driver training

**9. How do you pair drivers and fleet managers/dispatchers?**

- 1: Ad hoc/office-oriented
- 2: Hire by route/new driver board/personality testing only
- 3: Personality/group interaction/emphasis on resolutions/requests
- 4: Proactive training or follow-ups/ops team (all drivers, not just students)

**10. How do you minimize problems related to parking availability for drivers on the road?**

- 1: Minimal effort, rare reimbursement
- 2: Occasional reimbursement, app use, other limited effort
- 3: Paid program, multiple terminals/locations, additional effort
- 4: Dedicated, fully managed, paid + training or other options

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 1: Minimal, informal efforts
- 2: Some effort, support programs

- 3: Substantial programs, support

**11. (Owner-Op only) How does the company ensure contractors get home when they need to? Are there performance targets in this area?**

- 1: Nothing specific
- 2: Contractor responsibility
- 3: Supporting systems/app

**12. When drivers do get home, what is the target number of days off they should get before heading back out again?**

- 1: 1 day per 7 or 34 hours
- 2: 34-48 hrs, and/or some flexibility
- 3: 48 hours
- 4: 48 or more, daily or multiple per week

**13. What technology is provided to help drivers be more efficient? (e.g. email, mobile apps, other devices)**

- 1: Minimal, 3rd party focus
- 2: Some investment or customization
- 3: Dedicated app/portal, some other tools
- 4: Dedicated app/portal multiple additional tools
- 5: Dedicated app plus substantial additional tools

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 1: Minimal
- 3: 3rd party apps, Scanning/EBOL
- 5: Dedicated app/portal

TOP 20	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13
ACT	4	-	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	-	2	5
Brenny	2	-	2	2	4	3	4	4	4	2	-	4	1
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HALL OF FAME	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13
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FTCT	4	-	3	3	2	4	4	4	3	4	-	2	5
GIX	3	-	2	2	3	3	4	4	3	4	-	2	4
Halvor	4	-	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	2	-	2	4
Nussbaum	4	-	3	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	-	4	5
Prime	-	5	-	2	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	-	5



### What it tells us

What efforts the company makes to improve driver skill levels and provide growth opportunities; how the company helps its contractors become smarter business owners.

### Notable developments

Online has become the default method for ongoing driver training with very few leaving that area unexplored. However, when averaged out, the amount of training delivered beyond a driver's 1st year with the company is still quite small. Fleets are closing the gap for contractors, offering dedicated ongoing professional development with amounts comparable to their company driver counterparts.

Pushing continued education further, half of the finalists this year had a tuition reimbursement system in place. On the management development side, association programs were the go-to for two-thirds of the finalists. Those with formal programs were notably above that baseline.

### Scoring

**1. After the first year, how many training hours, on average, are completed by drivers per year?**

- 0: Nothing
- 1: Single method, less than hr/mth equiv
- 2: Some methods, up to 2 hrs/mth equiv
- 3: Multiple methods, more than 2 hrs/mth, sim
- 4: Multiple methods + sim, 2+ hrs/mth

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 1: Single method, less than 10hrs/yr equiv
- 2: Some methods, up to 20 hrs/yr equiv
- 3: Multiple methods, more than 20 hrs/yr, sim

**2. Are drivers compensated for attending or completing training?**

- 0: No, orientation only
- 1: Pay for some, indirect compensation for all
- 2: Direct pay

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 1: Occasionally, indirect
- 2: Direct compensation, indirect + extras

**3. Are there any continuing education opportunities, beyond job-related safety training, provided for drivers?**

- 0: Nothing
- 1: Light, occasional
- 2: Tuition or CDL reimbursement, additional options
- 3: Tuition reimbursement + multiple formal programs

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 0: Nothing
- 1: Minimal
- 2: Primarily 3rd party
- 3: Formal program, scholarship

**4. Do you have any programs to help drivers complete supplemental industry certifications (e.g., hazmat endorsement, FAST or TWIC)?**

- 0: No
- 1: Offer assistance
- 2: Offer assistance + pay/reimburse

**5. Beyond on-boarding and new entrant training, are there any formal coaching or mentoring programs available for drivers? If so, how do they work?**

- 0: No program
- 1: Gap/need-based or driver initiated
- 2: Proactive coaching process, regular review for coaching opportunities for all drivers
- 3: Formal, proactive program PLUS mentor/trainer/coach qualifications, competency, development opportunities, compensation

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 0: No program beyond new hires
- 1: Some coaching, informal
- 2: Formal, broader reach

**6. What education or professional development programs are in place to continue improving the quality of your management team?**

- 1: Minimal (task or performance focused, informal, weekly meetings)
- 2: Occasional, association involvement
- 3: Association + formal programs
- 4: Formal internal & external programs, regular opportunities
- 5: Substantial internal effort, multiple formal programs

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 1: Minimal (task or performance focused, informal, weekly meetings)
- 2: Occasional, association involvement
- 3: Association + formal programs
- 4: Formal internal & external programs, regular opportunities

**7. How does the company encourage the sharing of best practices among drivers?**

- 0: None/minimal
- 1: Company newsletter, light interaction
- 2: Moderate opportunities (private groups/ meetings, DAB)
- 3: Substantial opportunities (private groups/

meetings + DAB, podcast, other)

**8. How does the company structure and deliver driver meetings? (Two-way communication, not including messages or documents via satellite.)**

- 0: Nothing formal
- 1: Infrequent, single format
- 2: Periodic formal, few formats
- 3: Multiple delivery formats OR frequent live only OR recorded
- 4: Multiple delivery formats, frequent, recorded

**9. What percentage of drivers typically attend or participate in these meetings?**

- 0: No meetings
- 1: Under 40%
- 2: 40-75%
- 3: 75%+

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 1: Up to 1/3

- 2: 1/3 - 2/3
- 3: More than 2/3

**10. How does the company use social media to engage with drivers?**

- 0: None/minimal
- 1: Recruiting/recognition focus
- 2: Private groups and/or live streaming
- 3: Private groups and live streaming, driver-led

**11. Are drivers actively encouraged to join industry associations or participate in association activities? (e.g., joining Trucker Buddy or WIT, participating in truck driving championships, attending conferences)**

- 1: Informal, light
- 2: Direct contribution but limited events
- 3: Broad involvement with direct contributions/support
- 4: Broad involvement in multiple events, sponsorships & contributions

TOP 20	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11
ACT	2	2	2	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	2
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Decker	2	2	1	2	0	2	3	1	3	3	2
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Halvor	4	2	1	3	3	4	3	3	1	3	4
Nussbaum	4	2	3	3	3	5	3	2	2	2	1
Prime	1	2	3	3	2	4	3	4	1	3	3



## WORK / LIFE BALANCE

### What it tells us

How the company supports drivers/contractors when they're not driving.

### Notable developments

The ongoing pandemic has added more strain to the collective mental health of everyone in the industry. As a result, mental wellness has become a clear priority among finalists this year, which is a definite shift from previous years.

The pandemic has also forced companies to get creative with social events, leading to a significant increase combined live and virtual events, offsite meets, or social activities that didn't require people to get together at all.

### Scoring

**1. What facilities do you have available at your terminal(s) for drivers? (e.g., showers, laundry, kitchen, Internet access, TV, cafeteria, separate women's facilities)**

- 1: Standard – Shower, vending machines, computer/Internet, laundry at some locations
- 3: Expanded facilities (e.g., gym, healthcare, free food) at some locations, standard facilities at all
- 5: Expanded facilities at multiple locations, one or more with substantially expanded

**2. What facilities do you provide for drivers in the truck or on the road? (e.g., in-cab amenities like fridges, entertainment, high quality beds or seats; hotel or meal allowances)**

- 1: Standard (APU, inverter, fridge)
- 2: Minimal enhancement (sat radio, upgraded seats) (1 extra thing)
- 3: Some enhancements
- 4: Several enhancements, hotel options
- 5: Multiple enhancements, substantial hotel, home daily

**3. What types of support systems are available for drivers or their families? (e.g., EAP, daycare, concierge, emotional support)**

- 0: None
- 1: Open door policy, informal support
- 2: Some programs (EAP or equivalent)
- 3: Formal support program (mental health supports, concierge) beyond EAP

**4. Does the company provide health and wellness programs for drivers?**

- 0: No offerings
- 1: Basic only: healthy snacks, BP machine, sharing resources
- 2: Limited services: basic + Gym/wellness program
- 3: Some services: Gym/wellness program + additional 3rd party or dedicated program
- 4: Considerable services: wellness program + onsite physician/health coach, in-cab equipment, smoking cessation or other special

programs

- 5: Extensive services: many significant 3rd party and dedicated services

**5. Do you provide programs that assist drivers with financial or legal issues? If so, does the company pay any portion of the cost?**

- 0: None
- 1: Minimal, ad-hoc loans, referrals
- 2: EAP only
- 3: Company-sponsored services, multiple options

**Owner-Operator fleets**

- 0: None
- 1: Ad hoc, minimal
- 2: Education, loans, or access to legal
- 3: Discounts on programs, access to legal services

**6. Do you offer any programs to help drivers stay safe when not driving? (e.g., self-defense training, panic buttons)**

- 0: Nothing
- 1: Limited, ad hoc, TAT
- 2: Orientation, C-TPAT, parking, dispatch, call number/app
- 3: Multiple aids

**7. What kinds of social events does the company have? (e.g., BBQ, party for Christmas or other significant holidays, sports tournaments, sports pools, planned outings)**

- 0: Nothing
- 1: Minimal effort: BBQs, Xmas/Thanksgiving, DAW primarily
- 2: Multiple events, some extras
- 3: Substantial efforts, variety, offsite activities

**8. What percentage of drivers attend or participate in these social events?**

- 1: Limited, unknown, under 40%
- 2: Good participation (40-75%)
- 3: Large participation, or everyone reached across the year

**9. How much involvement do drivers have in the company's community work and charitable contributions?**

- 1: Participation in company, some ad hoc
- 2: Participation in company, contribution plan
- 3: Multiple events, convoys/parades
- 4: Large employee influence, company paid, active large group

**10. What efforts do you make to improve the overall image of the trucking industry?**

- 0: Minimal, equipment/driver focus
- 1: Association membership or light outreach
- 2: Association plus outreach
- 3: Association plus significant programs, investment

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Nussbaum	5	4	3	5	2	2	3	1	3	2
Prime	5	-	3	5	2	3	3	3	3	2

# 2021 BEST Fleets<sup>®</sup> TO DRIVE FOR

1

Best Overall Fleet for  
Large Carrier

Sponsored by TruckRight

Brent Nussbaum, Nussbaum  
Transportation (center), with Jane  
Jazrawy, CarriersEdge, and Dirk  
Kupar, TruckRight

2

Best Overall Fleet for  
Small Carrier

Sponsored by EpicVue

Andrew Boyle, Boyle Transportation  
(center), with Jane Jazrawy,  
CarriersEdge, and Lance Platt, EpicVue

1



2





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